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**PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT  
BOVILLS HALL FARM BARN, ST OSYTH ROAD,  
LITTLE CLACTON, ESSEX**

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**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF A PLANNING & LISTED BUILDING  
APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF USE OF GRADE II LISTED TRADITIONAL  
BUILDINGS TO TWO RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS**

Prepared on behalf of the Greenwich Hospital

October 2014

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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- 1.1 Bovills Hall Farm barn is located on the outskirts of Little Clacton, less than a mile from the centre of Little Clacton and less than 2 miles from the centre of Clacton. A location plan in Appendix A shows the site located off St Osyth Road and is owned by Greenwich Hospital.
- 1.2 Bovills Hall Farm barn is a Grade II Listed traditional 8 bay timber framed building with weather boarded walls and asbestos clad roof, with a number of open fronted outbuildings at the rear. The barn and adjoining outbuildings form the basis of this planning application, the barn is understood to date back to the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and it is situated adjacent to the Listed Farmhouse
- 1.3 A Structural Survey has been undertaken and the report confirms that the buildings are structurally sound and considered suitable for an alternative use and by nature of their listing are worthy of preservation.
- 1.4 The building has planning permission for a change of use into 2 offices with associated parking which was granted in July 2009 (09/00698/FUL and 09/00698/LBC). Following consultation with the Council on marketing of the building, the site has been the subject of a long term marketing campaign since August 2011 which sought to find occupiers to bring the building back into an active use. As detailed in the accompanying Marketing Report, there has been a lack of interest and no interested parties have been found to occupy the buildings. During the marketing phase, planning permission was refused for change of use to B1 light industrial, B2 general industrial and B8 storage on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 (12/00187/FUL).
- 1.5 A pre-application enquiry was submitted in March 2014 with draft proposal plans for change of use to residential as a viable long term use for the barn. The proposals were supported in principle subject to various supporting documents that now form the basis of this application.
- 1.6 It is proposed to convert Bovills Hall Farm barn into two residential units, as the only viable re-use which will prevent the buildings from falling into disrepair and this is considered to be an appropriate re-use of the redundant farm buildings. A sympathetic proposal has been developed utilising the

existing buildings and the layout generally replicates the office layout plans.

**1.7** This Planning & Listed Building application comprises:

1. Planning Application Form & Certificates
2. This Planning, Design & Access Statement
3. Marketing Report
4. Viability Assessment
5. Site Plan
6. Structural Statement, Design Principles & Methodology & Access Statement
7. Survey as existing drawings, floor plans and elevations.
8. Proposal drawings floor plans and elevations.
9. Roof Plans
10. Block Plan
11. Frame Survey
12. Outline Schedule of Alterations & Repairs
13. Ecology Survey Report
14. Historic Description & Analysis of Bovills Hall Barns including an Historic Impact Assessment
15. Transport Statement



1.8 The following drawings form the basis of the application:

- GH/01 – survey as existing floorplan
- GH/02 – Survey as existing elevations
- GH/03 – Survey as existing elevations
- GH/04 - Block Plan 1:500
- GH/5a – elevations
- GH/6b courtyard elevations
- GH/08 - Frame survey
- GH/09 – Frame survey
- GH/10 - Frame survey
- GH/11 - Roof plan 1:100 as existing
- GH/12A – Roof plan 1:100 proposed
- GH/14 – East elevation as existing
- GH/21 – Floorplans

## **2. THE SITE**

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- 2.1** The site is located along St Osyth road on the outskirts of Little Clacton, less than 1 mile to the north west of Clacton. Little Clacton is a village with a number of local services. There is a wider variety of shops and services in Clacton, less than 2 miles away. A location plan is contained in Appendix A.
- 2.2** The site is accessible via public transport with a bus stop (Little Clacton Meadow View Estate) within walking distance, served by route number 3 which runs between Harwich, Thorpe Le Soken and Clacton. From Little Clacton, there is a more frequent bus service using route 76, less than one mile away which serves Little Clacton Colchester, Weeley and Clacton. The site is within cycling distance of Little Clacton and Clacton.
- 2.3** The complex of former traditional agricultural buildings which form the basis of this change of use application sit on a site extending to 0.4 Ha. A site plan is contained in Appendix B.
- 2.4** Access to the site is via an existing access which was used in the past by farm vehicles on a regular basis. A Transport Assessment is included with the application, prepared by Journey Transport Planning. This report provides an assessment of the transport and access impacts of the proposal. The proposed residential properties would make use of the existing access arrangement for the site which has the benefit of visibility in accordance with the requirements as set out in the Manual for Streets.
- 2.5** The traditional rural buildings extend to approximately 688m<sup>2</sup>. The main barn, building A is Grade II Listed and comprises an eight bay traditional, aisled timber framed barn, formed off a brick plinth and clad externally with weatherboarding. Modern grain storage bins have been constructed internally. The roof is currently covered with corrugated asbestos cement sheeting but would originally have had a tiled or slated finish. There are open fronted buildings attached to the south of the main barn of masonry construction and solid redbrick. Photographs of the buildings and site are contained in Appendix C.



- 2.6 The buildings have unfortunately suffered deterioration over time as they are redundant and hence need a viable alternative use to enable investment in the buildings. The dominant bird on site is feral pigeon, as detailed in the accompanying ecology survey report. A structural statement accompanies this application to support the conversion of the buildings. The buildings are considered to be of sound construction and suitable for conversion. A schedule of alterations and repairs also forms the basis of the application.
- 2.7 A Description and Analysis of Bovills Hall Barns are contained in the accompanying document produced by Barry Hillman-Crouch Design & recording Services. The report details and analyses the fabric and form of the barn and its attached buildings.
- 2.8 An Extended Phase 1 Ecology and Bat Survey has been undertaken by Conservation Constructions and their report accompanies the application. The survey was undertaken to update an earlier survey report undertaken in 2010. Compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework conservation gain may be achieved by a weatherboard bat roost built into the East gable.
- 2.9 It is considered that a viable re-use needs to be found for the Grade II Listed barn and outbuildings, to prevent them from falling into disrepair. The applicant has kept the buildings in good repair however the expense associated with the upkeep of the buildings is increasing year on year. The maintenance of the buildings will become more difficult as costs increase and the buildings age further as there is more health and safety legislation to comply with. It is thought that the most appropriate option for the site is for a viable, long term re-use to be found now for the buildings, to secure their preservation.



### **3. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 3.1** The site was originally considered for a change of use to an alternative use in 2009 and following a positive pre-application enquiry, plans were prepared for a change of use to offices as these would enable investment in the buildings and considering commercial uses, a higher rate of return can be gained. Planning consent was granted for a change of use to offices in 2009.
- 3.2** Following the granting of planning consent the Council were approached regarding the proposed marketing of the buildings for commercial uses and during these discussions the Council recommended that a marketing campaign would benefit from the barns having a broader range of change of use options and hence a planning and listed building application was submitted for change of use to B1 light industrial, B2 general industrial use and B8 storage use (12/00187/FUL) however, this was subsequently refused on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012, albeit the alterations to the Listed building were approved (12/00188/LBC).
- 3.3** The Council were advised on 14 January 2011 that marketing of the barn for alternative uses was due to be undertaken and the method proposed. A letter from Strutt & Parker on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2011 confirmed that marketing was due to commence on the understanding that Tendring DC had no more comments to make.
- 3.4** The Council were advised by letter on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012 that the ongoing marketing had come to an end but actually whilst newspaper advertising stopped, a signboard has remained at the site until very recently.
- 3.5** As no offers have been made and no enquiries have been progressed. The site remains vacant and underused. A change of use to residential has therefore been considered as there is clearly no market for a commercial use. A pre-application enquiry was submitted in March 2014 and a response received dated 30 April 2014. Draft plans accompanied the pre-application enquiry and a copy of the response from Mr Ashby is contained in Appendix D.



#### 4. SITE PROPOSALS

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- 4.1 The applicant is keen to find a re-use for the barn in order to prevent this from being underused and allowing their condition to deteriorate. It is proposed to convert the traditional rural building at Bovills Hall Farm into two residential units.
- 4.2 This use is considered to be the only viable re-use for the buildings and a Viability Report accompanies this planning and listed building application. This shows that there is a significantly high cost associated with converting the building whilst maintaining its historic detailing. To be viable the proposal needs to be converted to 2 dwellings as 1 dwelling results in a very large dwelling which would produce a negative land value. The development is most likely to be of interest to an individual or small developer that can absorb some of the developer profit.
- 4.3 The proposals can be seen in more detail on the plans and elevations enclosed with this application which show how a residential use can be accommodated within the range of buildings. The main barn extends to approximately 333m<sup>2</sup>, and the proposal is to split the barn into two residential units. The main barn has a large open volume and benefits from a number of openings on the north elevation at the front of the building and on the south elevation at the rear. The scale and form of the building divides into two residential units.
- 4.4 There are outbuildings at the rear of the barn and these extend to 355m<sup>2</sup> which are capable of conversion and it is proposed that these areas are used for mainly bedrooms, ensuites, bathrooms, utility area and games room. It is considered that this makes the best use of the site and enables the main barn to be kept as an open volume as an open plan area without unnecessary subdivisions. The form of the outbuildings has been kept as symmetrical buildings leading from the main barn. Details of the proposed layout can be seen in greater depth on the 1:100 plans and elevations enclosed with this application.



## **4.5 Accommodation**

### **Unit 1 – Five bedrooms**

Open plan living and dining area leading to a kitchen. There are four bedrooms on the ground floor all of which are ensuite, a bathroom and 2 toilets. A further bedroom and ensuite is accommodated on a mezzanine in one bay and a mezzanine study area at the opposite end.

### **Unit 2 – Four bedrooms**

Open plan living, kitchen/dining area on the ground floor with 3 bedrooms, 2 of which have ensuite and there is a separate toilet and bathroom on the ground floor. Stairs from the living area lead up to a master bedroom and ensuite in one bay and a mezzanine study area at the opposite end. The layout can also include a games room which could alternatively be used from someone to work from home as a standalone study.

- 4.6** The design aims to maintain the character and style of the existing buildings through the use of similar materials and sympathetic conversion. Existing doors and windows have been retained and maximum use has been made of these to allow natural light into the buildings.
- 4.7** It is considered that the sympathetic proposal will ensure the future retention and survival of the building through providing a long term use for the building with prevention against the deterioration of the building. The re-use of an existing building and materials, an under used resource is a form of sustainable development in itself.
- 4.8** The site benefits from being in very close proximity to the residential areas of Little Clacton within cycling distance, less than 1 mile away, where there are local shops and services and a number of other surrounding villages. The site is also in close proximity to Clacton, less than 2 miles away. The site is considered to be accessible and in a sustainable location and therefore is an opportunity to make the best productive use of the building.
- 4.9** There is existing hard standing around the building which can easily



accommodate the associated parking. The existing access will be used which consists of hard standing and has been used as an agricultural access for tractors and trailers. Private amenity areas can also be created for the 2 residential units. The scale of development proposed can be accommodated at the site.

- 4.10** The proposal for a change of use to residential aims to minimise the extent of the alteration to the basic form, character and setting, yet provide an economically viable, long term use for the buildings and enable repair and maintenance to be carried out to ensure their survival.

This proposal has taken on board key aspects including those relating to the following:

- Use of the building and re-use with repair of original fabric. The conversion proposals shall not significantly alter or adversely affect the character and appearance of the original building in respect of the following:
  - Original structure
  - Original external materials and finishes
  - Internal spatial character
  - Original external openings
  - Skyline silhouette and roof plane of the main barn
  - First floors inserted in a non-intrusive manner
- Elevations have been kept simple with minimal changes
- Sympathetic consideration of internal features
- Parking arrangements and private amenity areas located for minimal impact on the setting
- Existing openings have already been created through the historical evolution of the building. These are utilised and this contributes to a

successful conversion.

- 4.11** A Historic Impact Assessment of the scheme to convert the buildings to a residential use is included with this application. The analysis of the scheme concludes that the architect has taken a light approach and retained most of the extant fabric.
- 4.12** An Outline Schedule of Alterations & Repairs accompanies the application with a photographic schedule.
- 4.13** The Extended Phase 1 Ecology and Bat Survey Report which accompanies the application states that in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework conservation gain may be achieved by a weatherboard bat roost built into the East gable. The provision of bird boxes in the garden on completion of the conversion are also a positive gain.
- 4.14** The Transport Statement enclosed with the application states that the proposal would be likely to result in a decrease in vehicular traffic considering the larger slow moving vehicles that would have accessed the former agricultural buildings and as such the proposals would be beneficial in terms of the use of the access point. Parking for the proposal can be provided in accordance with the requirements set out in Standards for Parking, Design and Good Practice (2009). A suitable turning area within the site can be provided to ensure vehicles can enter and exit the proposal site in forward gear. The existing refuse collection arrangements as maintained for Bovills Hall Farm will be utilised for the proposals and as such there will be no increase in terms of associated movements as the refuse vehicle already serves the site.



## **5. PLANNING POLICIES**

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5.1 Bovills Hall Farm falls within the planning control of Tendring District Council.

### **5.2 Tendring District Local Plan – adopted 2007**

#### **5.2.1 Policy QL1 – Spatial Strategy**

The main focus for new sustainable patterns of development in the District are set out in Policy QL1. The barn forming the basis of this application has become redundant from agriculture and a re-use is needed to prevent the building from falling into disrepair.

5.2.2 The site is adjacent to an existing farmhouse. There are surrounding residential areas in close proximity in Little Clacton less than a mile away and Clacton less than 2 miles away. There are a choice of shops and services in the surrounding area.

5.2.3 The proposal is considered to be a positive form of rural diversification for a building which has become redundant from agriculture and is a sustainable form of development, for a building which is underused, making the most efficient use of land and resources. The building materials will be re-used wherever possible and the conversion will only reuse the existing building footprint, no new additions are proposed.

#### **5.2.4 Policy QL9 – Design of new development**

All new development should make a positive contribution to the quality of the local environment and protect or enhance local character.

i) The proposal has been carefully considered to be well designed and respects the historic fabric and will ensure the necessary investment in the building to ensure its upkeep and valuable presence in the local area. The design works with the existing building and minimal changes are proposed;

It is evident that the costs of the upkeep of the building are likely to increase and that a viable re-use of the building is required in order to preserve the historic features. It is considered that the proposal which has been sympathetically designed will have a positive impact on the historical value of the building, which by nature of its listing is worthy of preservation;

- ii The existing building is re-used and no new additions are proposed.
- iii The skyline of the buildings is unchanged.
- iv The Extended Phase 1 Ecology and Bat Survey Report which accompanies the application states that in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework conservation gain may be achieved by a weatherboard bat roost built into the East gable.
- v) Boundary treatments and landscaping have been kept simple and respect the setting of the building.

#### **5.2.5 Policy EN6 and 6a – Biodiversity & Protected species**

An Extended Phase 1 Ecology and Bat Survey has been undertaken by Conservation Constructions and their report accompanies the application. The survey was undertaken to update an earlier survey report undertaken in 2010. Conservation gain may be achieved by a weatherboard bat roost built into the East gable.

#### **5.2.6 Policy EN22 – Extensions or alterations to a listed building**

The proposal is for the conversion of the existing building to 2 residential properties. The design has been carefully considered and the proposals largely reflect the conversion and alterations which has been agreed as part of the change of use to office consent. A schedule of alterations and repairs has been compiled and the proposal will not result in damage or a loss of features of special architectural or historic interest. The special character and setting of the building would be preserved and enhanced.



There are no proposed extensions to the Grade II Listed barn. Alterations are kept to a minimum, the external elevations will primarily retain the existing materials with repairs where necessary. A schedule of alteration and repairs is included in this application. The re-use of the building will ensure its future retention;

**5.2.7** Policy EN23 considers Development within the Proximity of a Listed Building. The proposal is for the re-use of an existing building which is Grade II Listed and the setting is considered to be improved by the proposal. The listed farmhouse is not considered to be adversely affected with the proposal being kept facing away from the farmhouse and the design ensures that overlooking is not an issue. The site will overall be improved by finding a long term use to secure the future upkeep costs.

**5.2.8 Policy EN24 considers Redundant Listed Agricultural Buildings**

- (i) The applicant has demonstrated that every reasonable attempt to secure suitable employment or community re-use has been made, and the application is supported by a statement of the efforts which have been made; and*
- (ii) The design and traffic issues in criteria a) and b) are fully satisfied. Approval for schemes, which are acceptable in terms of these criteria, will be subject to conditions restricting permitted development rights in relation to extensions, outbuildings in the curtilage and means of enclosure.*

**5.2.9 In response to this:**

The detailed scheme for conversion of Bovills Hall Farm barn will secure its preservation in terms of its historic fabric, character and appearance, and its contribution to the site. The proposal will prevent the building from falling into disrepair considering the increasing maintenance costs. It is considered essential to find a long term viable re-use for the building to secure its future preservation;

The proposed use will not generate significant vehicle movements that would cause additional traffic hazards and/or damage to minor roads. The existing access will be used which has accommodated numerous farm vehicles in the past.

**5.2.10** The building has been the subject of a comprehensive marketing campaign for a number of years and no alternative uses have been found for the barn. Planning consent was granted for a change of use to offices in 2009. The Council were advised in January 2011 that marketing of the barn for alternative uses was due to be undertaken and the method proposed. A letter from Strutt & Parker in July 2011 confirmed that marketing was due to commence. The Council were advised by letter on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012 that the ongoing marketing had come to an end but actually whilst newspaper advertising stopped, a signboard has remained at the site until very recently.

**5.2.11** As no offers have been made and no enquiries have been progressed. The site remains vacant and underused. A change of use to residential has therefore been considered as there is clearly no market for a commercial use.

**5.3 Tendring District Local Plan: Proposed Submission Draft (2012) ( as amended by the 2014 pre-submission focussed changes)**

**5.3.1 Policy SD5 – Managing Growth**

Bovills barn is a Grade II Listed timber framed barn which is redundant and requires a viable re-use. The character and openness of the countryside will be protected and enhanced through the proposal which re-uses an existing building and is a form of sustainable development. The proposal will ensure that the necessary investment is made to upkeep the buildings.



### 5.3.2 Policy SD9 – Design of New Development

The proposal makes a positive contribution to the quality of the local environment and will protect and enhance the local character by ensuring that there is investment in a Listed building which lies redundant and is worthy of preservation.

- i) the proposal reuses an existing building and retains its local character and distinctiveness through re-use of existing openings and minimising any changes made;
- ii) the existing building is re-used;
- iii) the development respects the existing building and the neighbouring farmhouse;
- iv) the proposals have been kept simple and will enhance the setting of the redundant building;
- v) boundary treatments and hard and soft landscaping reflect the function and character of the development and its surroundings.

#### **Part B: Practical Requirements**

- i) access to the site is practicable and the highway network will be able to safely accommodate the traffic the proposal will generate. A transport statement accompanies the application. The site had planning consent for change of use to office and the traffic movements will be less with a residential conversion and previous traffic would have been associated with an agricultural use.
- ii) Whilst working with an existing building, the design and layout of the development has considered accessibility;
- iii) the proposal is for conversion of an existing building to form 2 dwellings which will provide natural surveillance alongside the farmhouse.
- iv) The proposal will re-use existing materials of the existing building;
- v) buildings and structures are designed and orientated to ensure adequate daylight, outlook and privacy for future and existing residents as far is practical re-using an existing building;
- vi) provision is made for private amenity

#### **Part C: Impacts and Compatibility**

- i) the development will not have a materially damaging impact on the privacy, daylight or other amenities of occupiers of nearby properties. The nearest property is the farmhouse;
- ii) The proposal is for the change of use of an existing building to 2



residential dwellings. The development, including any road traffic arising, will not have a materially damaging impact.

iii) There is no pollution known that will materially harm future occupants.

### **5.3.3 Policy PLA4 – Nature Conservation and Geo-Diversity**

An Extended Phase 1 Ecology and Bat Survey has been undertaken by Conservation Constructions and their report accompanies the application. The survey was undertaken to update an earlier survey report undertaken in 2010. Conservation gain may be achieved by a weatherboard bat roost built into the East gable.

### **5.3.4 Policy PLA6 – The Historic Environment**

i) A Heritage Statement has been included with the Planning & Listed Building Application which contains a description and analysis of Bovills Hall and a historic analysis of the barn. The significance of the asset is assessed and the impact of the proposals considered.

ii) The Historic Impact Assessment of the scheme is included with the application. In summary, the consultant states that the architect has taken a light approach and retained most of the extant fabric. It must be borne in mind that the Barn, although containing the frame of the C16th barn, was in fact erected in the MC19th between 1839 and 1874 and much of its fabric dates to this period. The three easternmost bays and their associated fittings were added as new at this time. The report also states that almost all of the timber framed walls have been subsequently removed and replaced with brickwork or blockwork in the C20th. Only two doors, from the MC19th remain, both in parlous condition and of poor vernacular quality.

iii) From the surveys completed to date there are no suspected archaeological remains;

iv) The proposal will ensure that the Grade II listed timber framed barn is converted sympathetically and enhance the derelict barn, securing a viable, long term use.

v) A Description & Analysis of the building is included with the application along with an impact assessment. A schedule of alterations and repairs also accompanies the application.



### 5.3.5 Policy PLA8 – Listed Buildings

The proposed development affects a Listed Building:

- a) The proposal is justified as the only viable re-use to ensure the future retention of Bovills barn. The proposed conversion has been carefully considered to ensure a sympathetic proposal. A Heritage consultant has provided an analysis of the barn which assisted in formulating the proposals and the impact assessment confirms that a light touch has been made. Full plans and frame surveys form the basis of the application. The Heritage Statement, schedule of repairs and alterations and Marketing Report accompany the application;
- b) The proposal does not have an unacceptable effect on the special architectural or historic character and appearance of the building or setting as set out in the documents accompanying the application. A sympathetic conversion which follows the general layout of the previous office proposals granted consent. The intention has been to minimise alterations to the external envelope of the existing barns whilst trying to introduce as much natural light as possible to the internal spaces. The main volume of the barn remains open with non-intrusive mezzanine floors and the single storey out shots are utilised for additional accommodation where sub division is required;
- c) A schedule of repairs and alterations accompanies the application. Building materials, finishes and building techniques respect the listed building and its setting;
- d) A simple landscaping scheme is proposed having regard to the character and appearance of the Listed Building;
- e) The proposal is of an appropriate scale and design, re-using the existing building and no new elements are proposed. Existing openings are utilised wherever possible and intervention has been kept to a minimum;
- f) Modern grain bins will be removed and the proposal will ensure that the barn is restored and its future secured.
- g) The proposal would ensure a viable re-use is found for the use of the building, allowing investment to be made.

### 5.3.6 COU3 – Conversion of re-use of rural buildings in the countryside

Policy COU3 states *In addition to other policies in this Local Plan, all proposals for the re-use, conversion and alteration or extension of a rural*



*building in the countryside must also satisfy the following criteria:*

***a) the building is capable of accommodating the proposed use without the need for significant extension or alteration or reconstruction;***

Bovills Hall Farm Barn has been surveyed and has been found to be structurally sound and a Structural Statement accompanies the planning application.

***b) the proposed use (including any proposed alterations or extensions to the building), its associated operational area, the provision of any services, and / or any amenity space or outbuildings, would not harm its appearance as a rural building or adversely affect the rural setting of the building in the locality;***

The conversion proposals shall not significantly alter or adversely affect the character and appearance of the original building. The elevations have been kept simple and existing openings utilised wherever possible. Parking arrangements and private amenity areas are located for minimal impact on the setting.

***c) the proposed use would not create significant levels of traffic, particularly lorries, on rural roads (proposals for employment uses will be required to provide a sustainability assessment which may include a Travel Plan designed to maximise the opportunities to reduce the need to travel by private car);***

The site was formerly in agricultural use and also has planning consent for change of use to offices, both uses generating far greater traffic movements than 2 dwellings. Vehicle movements would therefore decrease with the proposed use and journeys would be made by car rather than slower moving farm vehicles, vans or lorries. It is proposed to use an existing farm access. A transport statement accompanies the application.

***d) proposals which would create a significant number of jobs should be well located in relation to towns and villages or be readily accessible by public transport; and***

The site is well related to Little Clacton and the development will create jobs locally for the construction work involved in the conversion. Whilst commercial uses have been sought for the site, there has been no response from the market to pursue any commercial use at the site.

***e) it will not lead to unacceptable levels or types of traffic or problems***



*of road safety or amenity and will not require highway improvements which will harm the character of rural roads in the area.*

The proposal will not lead to unacceptable levels of traffic or problems with road safety, the proposal will reduce traffic movements from the site. A transport statement accompanies the application.

*Proposals for the conversion or re-use of rural buildings in the countryside for market housing will only be permitted where the following requirements have been met:*

*f) alternative uses for the economic use of the building have been fully explored to the satisfaction of the Council; which in the case of a building considered to be suitable for Class B1 or B2 purposes has been marketed for a sustained period of at least 12 months;*

Pre-application advice was first sought from a Planning Officer and Listed Building Officer and the applicant gained a planning and listed building consent for change of use to office so that a future purchaser or tenant could see what conversion would be possible. Planning & Listed Building Consent were granted for change of use to office in 2009. The applicant again consulted with the Council on a proposed marketing campaign, outlining the format intended and took on board comments that it would may be beneficial to have a consent to cover a broader range of commercial uses and hence a further permission was applied for but was refused. On the basis that no further comments were received the site has been marketed for alternative uses since July 2011 and no offers have been received despite every endeavour to find an alternative use for the building. A Marketing Report accompanying the application outlines the marketing undertaken and the clear conclusion that there is no demand in this location for a building of this nature.

*g) the proposal is a high quality design where the building is of architectural or historic merit or makes an important historical and visual contribution to the landscape, using appropriate methods of conservation to retain the character and historic interest of the building (in the case of barns the single open volume should be retained with minimal change to the external appearance); and*

The proposal has been carefully considered and using the principles accepted as part of the office conversion, the proposal is a high quality design where the Grade II Listed barn makes an important historical and



visual contribution to the site. The character of the barn is retained with minimal external changes and keeping the open volume of the barn, utilising the single storey range. The simple bulk form and plain outline of the buildings would be retained. The intention has been to minimise alterations to the external envelope of the existing barns whilst trying to introduce as much natural light as possible to the internal spaces. The main volume of the barn remains open with non-intrusive mezzanine floors and the single storey out shots are utilised for additional accommodation where sub division is required.

***h) the creation of a residential curtilage and associated domestic paraphernalia would not have a harmful effect on the character of the site or setting of the building, group of buildings or the surrounding area.***

The barn benefits from single storey ranges which provide the boundary for a residential curtilage and amenity areas. There is adequate space for parking and the proposal has been designed to minimise the effect on the character of the site.

#### **5.4 National Planning Policy Framework 2012**

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF promotes the deliverability of a wide choice of high quality homes and the proposal will create 2 residential units which will provide unique converted properties of high quality design. The site is located in an accessible location, being located along St Osyth road on the outskirts of Little Clacton, less than 1 mile to the north west of Clacton. Little Clacton is a village with a number of local services. There is a wider variety of shops and services in Clacton, less than 2 miles away. The site can be considered to be in a sustainable location, it is not remotely located in open countryside away from a defined settlement.

**5.4.1** Paragraph 55 states that *to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Local Planning Authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure*



*the future of heritage assets or where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.*

**5.4.2** The proposal is considered to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, the previous office scheme is not a viable option. The change of use will provide new housing whilst making the most efficient use of the existing natural resources, reusing the existing redundant building. The properties will contribute to housing land supply. The building has been underused for some considerable time. The proposals are designed to preserve the special character of the building.

**5.4.3 Paragraph 17 – Core Planning Principles**

- Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.
- Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- Take into account the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban area, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it.

**5.4.4** The building at Bovills Farm is a substantial historic building which is currently under used and a long term viable use is vital to ensure the building can have the necessary investment made. There is an opportunity to propose a sensitive scheme so that the building can be restored, making a positive contribution to the surrounding area and can be enjoyed by future generations.

**5.4.5** In accordance with the principles of the NPPF a high standard of design has been applied, considering the previous planning history and taking this scheme back to basic principles to work with the historic building whilst providing a good level of amenity for future occupants who will have the



opportunity to live in a unique building.

The proposal is considered to fully comply with the Core Planning Principles within the NPPF.

**5.4.6 Section 6 – Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes**

Paragraph 55 advises that Local Planning Authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as where the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets or where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.

**5.4.7** The proposal is for the re use of a redundant building and this will allow the required investment to make the necessary repairs and enhance the building. There are special circumstances for a proposal of this nature and whilst a number of alternative uses have been explored at the site, it is clear that there is not a demand for a commercial use. The investment required in the building is significant.

**5.4.8 Section 7 – Requiring Good Design**

The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and it is a key aspect of sustainable development. In this proposal we are reusing an existing building and therefore need to work within these constraints and take the opportunity to highlight the historic features and work with these to create a unique living space in a historic buildings. The design of the proposal has been carefully considered to propose a sympathetic change of use which balances the issues with a site of this nature where design restrictions are inevitable working with the existing fabric.

In the NPPF paragraph 131 it states that, in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of;

*the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage*



*assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

*□ the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*

*□ the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

- 5.4.9** A change of use to residential is the only viable re-use for this historic building which is worthy of retention and requires investment to enable its continued upkeep. There is a desire to sustain and enhance the building by proposing a viable re-use. The building is in a sustainable location and the conversion is sensitive with the re-use of the building and materials so that the building can continue to make a positive contribution to the local character of the area.

## **6. SUMMARY**

- 6.1** Bovills Hall Farm Barn is a traditional rural building which is Grade II Listed and the historic building is worthy of preservation. The site is accessible, in close proximity to the residential areas of Little Clacton and Clacton and considered to be in a sustainable location. The proposal for re-use of the existing buildings at the site for a residential use is considered to be a form of sustainable development, re-using an existing building which is currently redundant.
- 6.2** The building has been the subject of a comprehensive marketing campaign over a number of years. The buildings had planning consent for change of use to an office use before the marketing was undertaken. The Council were approached in advance regarding the proposed marketing of the buildings for commercial uses and were advised in January 2011 that marketing of the barn for alternative uses was due to be undertaken and the method proposed. In July 2011 it was confirmed that marketing was due to commence on the understanding that Tendring DC had no more comments to make. To broaden the consent on the site an application for change of use to B1 light industrial, B2 general industrial use and B8 storage use was submitted, however this was refused in April 2012, albeit the alterations to the Listed building were approved. The Council were advised by letter on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012 that the ongoing marketing had come to an end although actually whilst newspaper advertising stopped, a signboard has remained at the site until very recently. There is clearly no demand for a commercial use for this building as no offers have been made and no enquiries have been progressed.
- 6.3** The building requires significant investment and a viable re-use to be found. The site remains vacant and underused. A change of use to residential is therefore being proposed as there is clearly no market for a commercial use.
- 6.4** Prior to this application, a pre-application enquiry was submitted earlier this year and it addressed the main matters and concluded that subject to matters highlighted being satisfactorily addressed it was considered likely



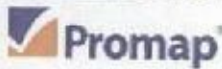
that an application for the proposal would receive a recommendation for approval.

- 6.5 The barn is structurally sound and capable of conversion to a residential use to secure a long term re-use for the building. The aim is to re-use the existing building and materials to prevent them from falling into disrepair. The conversion proposals shall not significantly alter or adversely affect the character and appearance of the original building. The design is sympathetic to the architectural and historic nature of the building and its setting. The elevations have been kept simple and existing openings utilised wherever possible. The use will preserve the building for the future and would enable a productive use to be found for the site.
- 6.6 The overall appearance of the site will be enhanced by the proposal, making use of and converting the existing building. The level of traffic that will be generated is not considered to be detrimental to the local area and road network when considering the frequency of the use of the site by large agricultural vehicles in the past and the level of traffic that would be associated with the proposal for an office use which was given consent.
- 6.7 The proposal is considered to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in accordance with Local Plan Policies and the National Planning Policy Framework, the previous office scheme is not a viable option. The change of use will provide new housing whilst making the most efficient use of the existing natural resources, reusing the existing redundant building. The building has been underused for some considerable time and the proposed properties will contribute to housing land supply.

**APPENDIX A**



# BOVILLS HALL, CLACTON



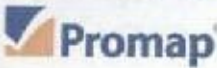
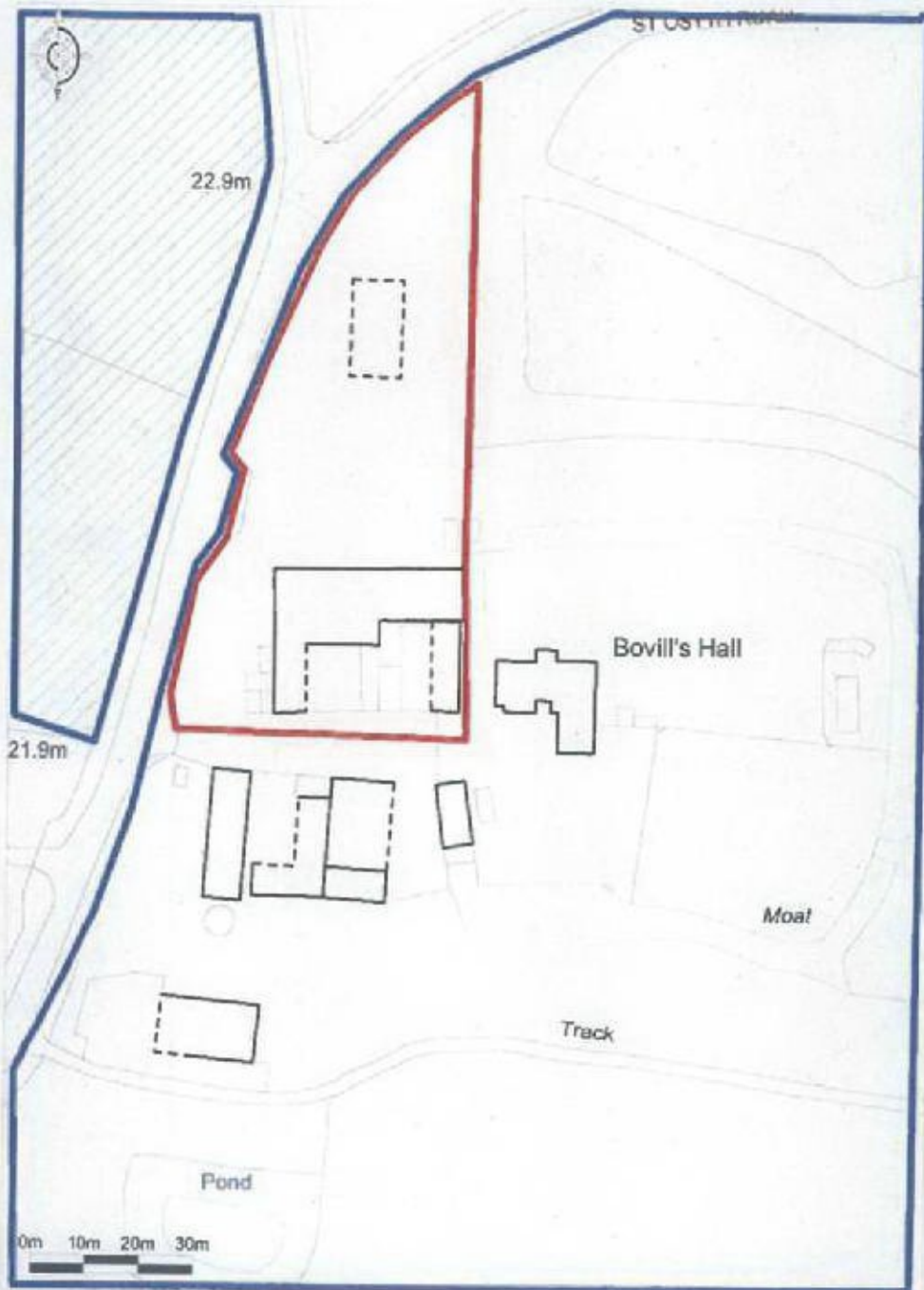
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**APPENDIX B**



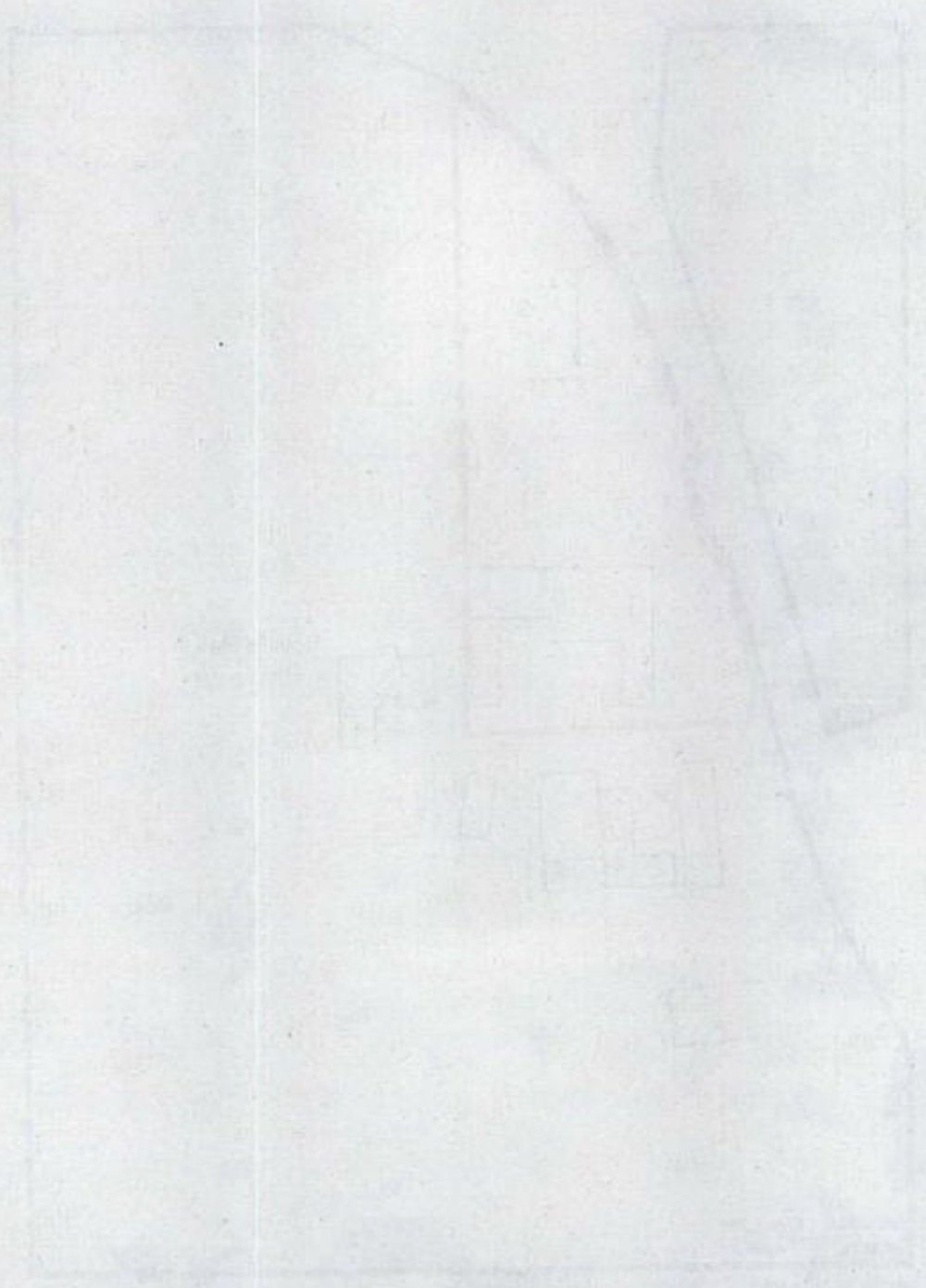
BOVILLS HALL, CLACTON



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**APPENDIX C**





Tendring District Local Plan: Proposed Submission Draft (2012) (as amended by the 2014 Pre-Submission Focussed Changes)

SD5 Managing Growth  
SD9 Design of New Development  
PLA4 Nature Conservation and Geo-Diversity  
PLA6 The Historic Environment  
PLA8 Listed Buildings  
COU3 Conversion of Re-Use of Rural Buildings in the Countryside

**Supplementary Planning Guidance:**

- Essex Design Guide (2005)
- Historic Barn Conversions - A Way Forward (1989)
- The Essex Countryside Historic Barns - A Planning Appraisal (1983)

**Other planning guidance:**

- Residential Barn Conversions (c1985)
- Tendring Landscape Character Assessment (2001)

**Planning History:**

93/00442/FUL	(Bovills Farm, Little Clacton) Filling with surface material from Little Clacton Bypass	Determination	08.07.1993
94/00742/CMTR	(Bovills Farm, Little Clacton) ESS.36.94.TEN - Construction of screen bond and infilling with surplus material from the Little Clacton and Weeley Heath By-Pass	Determination	13.10.1994
08/00907/FUL	Change of use of existing traditional buildings to B1 office use (Bovills Hall Farm Barn).	Withdrawn	28.07.2008
08/00908/LBC	Change of use of existing traditional buildings to B1 office use (Bovills Hall Farm Barn)	Withdrawn	28.07.2008
09/00483/FUL	Change of use from agricultural farm yard to temporary storage compound for utility works.	Approved	23.07.2009
09/00697/FUL	Change of use of existing Grade II traditional buildings to a B1 office use.	Approved	03.11.2010
09/00698/LBC	Alterations to the fabric and structure of the building in connection with planning application for change of use.	Approved	18.01.2010

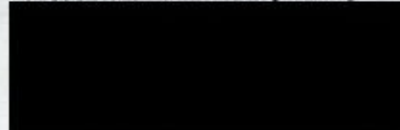
# Tendring District Council



Planning  
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Please ask for: Mr Gary Ashby



30 April 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

#### PRE-APPLICATION ENQUIRY

REFERENCE NUMBER:	14/30132/PREAPP
ENQUIRY:	CHANGE OF USE TO 2 NO. RESIDENTIAL UNITS.
LOCATION:	BOVILLS HALL FARM BARN, ST OSYTH ROAD WEST, LITTLE CLACTON, CLACTON ON SEA

Thank you for your pre-application enquiry as detailed above. I have visited the site and considered the proposal based on the information submitted. Below I have outlined the main planning policies that are relevant to your proposal, detailed the main planning considerations and noted the information required to support a planning application for your proposal.

#### Relevant Policies

##### National Planning Policy Framework:

Paragraphs 17, 55, 58, 61, 109, 128 and 134.

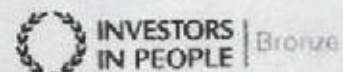
##### Local Policies:

The Tendring District Local Plan (2007) is referred to as the Saved Plan and the Tendring District Local Plan: The Proposed Submission Draft (2012) (as amended by the 2014 Pre-Submission Focussed Changes) is referred to as the Draft Plan. The Draft Plan has been through the first phase of public consultation and the amount of weight that can be afforded to each of its policies varies depending on the number of unresolved objections and the nature of those objections.

##### Tendring District Local Plan (2007)

- QL1 Spatial Strategy
- QL9 Design of New Development
- EN6 Biodiversity
- EN6a Protected Species
- EN22 Extensions or Alterations to a Listed Building
- EN23 Development within the Proximity of a Listed Building
- EN24 Redundant Listed Agricultural Buildings

Chief Executive  
Ian Davidson





**APPENDIX D**

**SOUTH ELEVATION**





**SOUTH ELEVATION**



**PARKING AREA**



**BOVILLS HALL FARM BUILDINGS**

**TIMBER FRAMED BARN**



**WEST ELEVATION**

